

CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED TRAIN

Project Environmental Impact Report /
Environmental Impact Statement

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SUPPLEMENTAL

San Jose to Merced Section Alternatives Analysis Report

May 2011



CALIFORNIA
High-Speed Rail Authority



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration



**California High-Speed Train Project
Environmental Impact Report /
Environmental Impact Statement**

**San Jose to Merced
SUPPLEMENTAL ALTERNATIVES
ANALYSIS REPORT**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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May 2011

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SUPPLEMENTAL ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS SAN JOSE TO MERCED

ES.1 RESULTS FROM THE SUPPLEMENTAL ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

This May 2011 San Jose to Merced Supplemental Alternatives Analysis (AA) Report updates the Preliminary AA Report that the California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) issued for the San Jose to Merced high-speed train (HST) section in June 2010.

This Supplemental AA has been prepared to document additional development and refinement of alignments and design options for Morgan Hill – Gilroy, Pacheco Pass, and San Joaquin Valley subsections, recommending alternatives and design options to be further studied through the environmental process. Alignment and design option revisions are discussed below by subsection.

The Authority and City of San Jose are currently working collaboratively with Community Working Groups to develop Visual Design Guidelines for the City of San Jose. Further analysis for the San Jose Station Approach and Monterey Highway subsections will occur before future recommendations are made for these two subsections.

Morgan Hill to Gilroy Subsection

- East of UPRR to Downtown Gilroy Alignment Alternative, East of UPRR to East Gilroy Alignment Alternative, and US 101 to Downtown Gilroy Alignment Alternative: At the request of the cities of Morgan Hill and Gilroy, an additional design option has been developed placing the alignment at-grade in the Morgan Hill and/or Gilroy areas. For proposed underpasses to meet adjacent parallel roads at-grade (e.g., Monterey Road), this design option would involve partially raising the HST and Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) tracks up to 15 feet in Morgan Hill and Gilroy.
- East of UPRR to Downtown Gilroy Alignment Alternative and US 101 to Downtown Gilroy Alignment Alternative: At the request of the City of Gilroy, an additional design option is under development for a partially covered trench in Downtown Gilroy. Fire/Life/Safety and ventilation considerations will need to be taken into account.
- US 101 to East Gilroy Alignment Alternative and East of UPRR to East Gilroy Alignment Alternative: At the request of the City of Gilroy, an aerial design option has been developed near the proposed East Gilroy/Leavesley Road HST station to accommodate the existing and a planned future roadway network.

Pacheco Pass Subsection

- The Refined Program Alignment Alternative and the Close to 152 Alignment Alternative have been refined to avoid some potential landslide areas in the western portion of the Pass.

San Joaquin Valley Crossing Subsection

- In response to concerns expressed by farming interests regarding impacts to agricultural land and businesses, a Henry Miller Road to Avenue 24/SR 152/Avenue 21 Alignment Alternative has been developed that would travel from Henry Miller road to just south of SR 152 for 4½ miles and then turn south to connect to the Ave 21 wye of the Merced to Fresno Section. The Authority will continue to work with the community to seek out additional feasible alternatives for the wye connection.

ES.2 COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Following release of the Preliminary AA Report on June 3, 2010, the project team has held over 80 meetings with elected officials and staff, other key stakeholders, and the public throughout the San Jose to Merced Section. Total attendance at the public meetings was over 870 participants.

The project team heard consistent overall concerns across the corridor including: impacts to agriculture; local roads, connectivity, and access; right-of-way, eminent domain, and impacts to property values; noise/vibration; future station area development plans; visual impacts; and impacts to wildlife/biological resources. These concerns were expressed at meetings and through written correspondence in the form of comment cards, letters, and e-mails. The team conveyed that each of these concerns will be studied in greater detail in the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Statement (EIR/EIS). Comments were also made regarding overall project funding and ridership projections.

Outreach activities (including the San Jose Visual Design Guidelines Community Working Group process, the South Santa Clara County Community Engagement workshops, and additional public meetings regarding this Supplemental AA) will continue to occur throughout the corridor in 2011 to obtain agency and public feedback to inform the Draft EIR/EIS.

ES.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The staff makes the following recommendations to the Board. These recommendations are summarized in Table ES-1 including the alignment and design option names, AA recommendations, reasons, and environmental /other concerns. Changes between the Preliminary and Supplemental AA are bolded. The alignments, design options, and stations recommended to be carried forward are shown on Figure ES-1.

Morgan Hill - Gilroy

- East of UPRR to Downtown Gilroy Alignment Alternative (design options: aerial, **at-grade**, open trench, and **partially covered trench**.)
- US 101 to Downtown Gilroy Alignment Alternative (design options: aerial, **at-grade in Gilroy**, open trench, and **partially covered trench**.)
- East of UPRR to East Gilroy Alignment Alternative (design options: **at-grade in Morgan Hill** and **aerial in East Gilroy station area**)
- US 101 to East Gilroy Alignment Alternative (design options: at-grade, **aerial in East Gilroy station area**)
- Gilroy Downtown Station (design options: aerial, **at-grade**, trench)
- East Gilroy Station (design options: at-grade, **aerial**)

Pacheco Pass

- Close Proximity to SR 152 Alignment Alternative - **refined for potential landslide areas in the western portion of the Pass**
- Refined Program Alignment Alternative - **refined for potential landslide areas in the western portion of the Pass**

San Joaquin Valley Crossing

- Henry Miller Road to Avenue 24 Alignment Alternative
- Henry Miller Road to Avenue 21 Alignment Alternative
- **Henry Miller Road/SR152/Avenue 21 Alignment Alternative**

Wye to Merced

(Carried Forward by the Board from August 2010 Supplemental AA)

- Alternative A1 - BNSF
- Alternative A2 – UPPR/SR 99
- Refined Ave 24 Wye (large triangle)
- Ave 21 Wye for South SR 152 Option

New Design Options

- Le Grand Design Options
- West Chowchilla Design Option (Hybrid)

Table ES-1: Alignment Alternatives and Station Location Options Considered

ALIGNMENT ALTERNATIVE/STATION LOCATION AND DESIGN OPTIONS	DECI- SION		REASONS FOR ELIMINATION*							ENVIRONMENTAL/OTHER CONCERNS	
	Carried Forward	Withdrawn	Construction	Incom- patibility	Right-of-way	Connectivity/ Accessibility	Revenue/ Ridership	Alignment Eliminated**	Environment		
San Jose Station Approach Subsection											
For this Subsection, staff will Report to the Board in the future following completion of Visual Design Guidelines for the City of San Jose											
Monterey Highway Subsection											
For this Subsection, staff will Report to the Board in the future following completion of Visual Design Guidelines for the City of San Jose											
Morgan Hill-Gilroy Subsection											
East of UPRR to Downtown Gilroy (Program Alignment)	X									Residential/business displacements; Biological, cultural and agricultural resources	
• Design Options in Gilroy: (aerial, at-grade , trench, partially covered trench)											
• Design Options in Morgan Hill:(aerial, at-grade)											
US 101 to Downtown Gilroy	X									Residential/business displacements; Biological, cultural, agricultural, parkland and visual resources	
• Design Options in Gilroy: (aerial, at-grade , trench, partially covered trench)											
Gilroy Station Loop		X							P	Residential/business displacements; Biological, cultural, agricultural, parkland and visual resources; High capital costs; Community concerns	
US 101 to East Gilroy	X									Residential displacements; Biological, cultural, parkland and agricultural resources	
• Design Options in East Gilroy station area: (at-grade, aerial)											
East of UPRR to East Gilroy	X									Residential/business displacements; Biological, cultural and agricultural resources	
Design Options in Morgan Hill: (aerial, at-grade)											
• Design Options in East Gilroy station area: (at-grade, aerial)											
Notes: *Reason: Primary (P) and secondary (S) reasons for elimination. **Alignment Eliminated column only applies to station locations. If an alignment is eliminated, a specific station location may no longer be necessary.											

Table ES-1: Alignment Alternatives and Station Location Options Considered

ALIGNMENT ALTERNATIVE/STATION LOCATION AND DESIGN OPTIONS	DECI- SION		REASONS FOR ELIMINATION*							ENVIRONMENTAL/OTHER CONCERNS	
	Carried Forward	Withdrawn	Construction	Incom- patibility	Right-of-way	Connectivity/ Accessibility	Revenue/ Ridership	Alignment Eliminated**	Environment		
Morgan Hill-Gilroy Subsection (continued)											
Station Location Options											
Morgan Hill (4-track)		X							P	Visual resources; Agency concerns	
Downtown Gilroy (4-track)	X									Business displacements; cultural and visual resources	
• Design Options: (aerial, trench, at-grade, partially covered trench)											
Downtown Gilroy (2-track)		X							P	Cultural and visual resources	
East Gilroy (4-track)	X									Biological, agricultural and visual resources	
• Design Options: (at-grade, aerial)											
Morgan Hill US 101 at Cochrane (Four-track)		X							P	Agency concerns	
Pacheco Pass Subsection											
Refined Program Alignment	X									Residential / business displacement, biological, agricultural and parkland resources – refined to avoid potential landslide areas in the western portion of the Pass	
Close Proximity to SR 152	X									Residential / business displacement, biological, agricultural and parkland resources – refined to avoid potential landslide areas in the western portion of the Pass	
Notes: *Reason: Primary (P) and secondary (S) reasons for elimination. **Alignment Eliminated column only applies to station locations. If an alignment is eliminated, a specific station location may no longer be necessary.											

Table ES-1: Alignment Alternatives and Station Location Options Considered

ALIGNMENT ALTERNATIVE/STATION LOCATION AND DESIGN OPTIONS	DECI- SION		REASONS FOR ELIMINATION*							ENVIRONMENTAL/OTHER CONCERNS
	Carried Forward	Withdrawn	Construction	Incom- patibility	Right-of-way	Connectivity/ Accessibility	Revenue/ Ridership	Alignment Eliminated**	Environment	
San Joaquin Valley Crossing Subsection										
Henry Miller Road to Avenue 24 (Revised Program Alignment)	X									Residential displacements; Biological and agricultural resources; Agency concerns
SR 140		X		S					P	Residential/business displacements; Biological, agricultural & parkland resources; Increased travel time
South of GEA		X							P	Biological, agricultural and parkland resources; Residential/business displacements; Results in additional time and distance with resulting costs and impacts
Henry Miller Road to SR 152		X	P							Constructability issues; Residential/business displacements; Biological and agricultural resources; Agency concerns
Henry Miller Road to Avenue 21	X									Residential displacements; Biological and agricultural resources
Henry Miller Road to Avenue 22		X	P						S	Residential displacements; Biological and agricultural resources; Agency concerns
Henry Miller Road/SR 152/ Avenue 21	X									Residential displacements; Biological and agricultural resources.
Notes: *Reason: Primary (P) and secondary (S) reasons for elimination. **Alignment Eliminated column only applies to station locations. If an alignment is eliminated, a specific station location may no longer be necessary.										

Figure ES-1: Alignment and Station Alternatives to be Carried Forward

